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THE COVER

The cover shots are of Igor Youskevitch and Nora Kaye and were taken especially for Dancing Star magazine by our staff photographer, Bill Cogan, at the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House during a rehearsal with Ballet Theatre.

an informal interview with

IGOR YOUSKEVITCH

This is the fifth in a series of interviews with interesting personalities in the world of dance. The following interview with Igor Youskevitch was held in his dressing room at the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco during his engagement there with the Ballet Theatre, January 26, 1955.

(The First of Two Parts)

Q. To begin with, Mr. Youskevitch, at what age did you start your dance training?

A. I started quite late. I was 20 years old.

Q. What made you decide upon ballet as a dance career?

A. Well, whenever I am asked that question I always answer that it is a good business. Actually, I had thought about dancing for a long time, but what made me really start taking ballet lessons was an offer I had to become a partner of a lady who needed a dance partner with strong muscles to toss her around. She has seen me perform athletically and offered me a job. So I decided to try — and I've been in ballet ever since.

Q. Did this offer take place in America?

A. No. It was in Yugoslavia.

Q. Was that your home?

A. No. I was born in Russia, but after the revolution we settled in Yugoslavia where I lived for a long time.

Q. In the first place, then, you were majoring in athletics. Was it weight lifting you specialized in, Mr. Youskevitch?

A. No. It was mainly gymnastics.

NORA KAYE and
IGOR YOUSKEVITCH

—A Bill Cogan photo

Q. How did your parents feel about your decision to take up dancing?

A. Well, as are most parents who do not have any connection with the theatre world, they were a little uneasy about the whole matter. But I managed to convince them that everything would turn out all right.

Q. From your observiations as a highly successful dancer who has toured throughout the world, which of the various countries you have danced in holds the greatest interest in ballet?

A. That is a little difficult to answer. You see, even in the same country, the interest varies from city to city. However, I can tell you which audience was the most enthusiastic on our last European tour. It was the Viennese audience in Vienna, Austria.

Q. How do you account for their particular interest in the ballet?

A. I believe it's because they are so very musically minded, what with their opera, music and ballets. Their interest is of the highest quality and they know, perhaps better than any city in the world, what is good and what is bad.

Q. Mr. Youskevitch, would you say that Americans at large are becoming more interested in the ballet as an entertainment medium than they were a few years ago?

A. Yes. Definitely.

Q. What do you think has been the greatest factor in the growth of ballet interest in this country?

A. I would say there are several factors. First of all, I believe the ballet companies that are touring this country are helping to stimulate the interest of people and then, of course, ballet has quite a prominent place in television. Also, motion pictures and musicals have done a great deal. Today, the youngsters are growing up with ballet all around them; consequently they are without prejudice at seeing men dancing in them.

Q. While we're on the subject, as a professional dancer do you have any suggestions to offer that might help even more to further the interest in ballet of the average man, woman and child in this country?

A. Again, that is quite a hard question to answer right off. But I think that lectures on the subject would help, and ballet could be introduced in schools, the same as athletics are. I don't mean this should be done with the thought of making all students professional dancers, but with giving them an insight into ballet as an art. Also, there is the physical aspect that can't be overlooked — it is definitely an excellent body conditioner and wonderful for the health.

Q. Do you think that a State subsidy would help ballet in our country?

A. I believe so. In fact, I know of one such instance in New York where they do have ballet as a part of their school curriculum.

Q. Mr. Youskevitch, it seems that most ballet schools find it rather difficult to recruit enough boys for their classes. The same must be true of the ballet companies, is that right?

A. Yes. You see, we take our boys from the dance schools and if there are not enough in the schools, there are not enough for the companies.

Q. What do you think is the main reason for the shortage of males in ballet?

A. In the past this has always been a somewhat touchy subject, for many people believed that ballet was a purely feminine art. Of course, they were absolutely wrong because there is no art which belongs to one sex in particular. If it belongs

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only to one sex it is not an art. The thought that ballet is a female art exists only in a person's mind. The sooner people understand that ballet is an art and therefore must be equally for both male and female, the sooner we will have more males in the ballet. And as far as ballet being a sissy business, believe me, I can testify personally that it takes a lot of strength, a lot of muscles to become a good ballet dancer. In fact, many boxers, wrestlers and athletes have studied and are studying ballet for body conditioning.

Q. I don't have to ask whether you recommend ballet dancing for boys, then?

A. I certainly do recommend it. Ballet training is like athletics, only more artistic. It's physical exercise, it stimulates your hearing through music as well as your rhythm and movement. It's very good training for boys.

Q. Mr. Youskevitch, it certainly is no secret that great artists, whether they be painters, actors or dancers, are all too often not the wealthiest of individuals — yet they pursue their art with a passion. With this in mind would you tell our readers what dancing has meant to you over the years of your highly successful career?

A. In the first place, dancing is a profession. You choose a particular profession because you like this profession. For example, many people do not like their jobs — but this can not be so with ballet. If you do not like ballet, you will never become a dancer of merit. Ballet holds within itself many difficulties which can only be overcome if you truly like it. Through the years, I can honestly say that I have had great satisfaction in everything I have done. In spite of the fact that occasionally you get a little discouraged and tired and sometimes you think, "why did I take up dancing — why didn't I learn something else?" But, of course, such thoughts are only temporary and the next day you think how lucky you are that you are actually dancing and not doing something else.

Q. In other words, the good things far outnumber the bad?

A. That's right.

(To Be Continued)

Tap Dancing

. . . IT'S **NOT** JUST A RACKET

by BOBBY ROOT

A simple riff exercise which I use to limber up with consists of 12 taps. It's no great big feet — by that I mean no great feat. I do this particular exercise about once a second, which is at the rate of 760 taps per second. If you multiply this by the number of tap dancers there are in the world, you'll find it adds up to quite a big noise.

I recently overheard a lady remark that she didn't care for Tap dancing because it was "Just a lot of noise". To tell you the truth, this sort of bothered me as I am quite fond of all kinds of dancing — and Tap dancing in particular. However, I came to the not too pleasant conclusion that this outspoken lady has a point. For as my old Dad (Johnny Root) used to say, "Most dancers are heavy on the hoof."

This brings to mind 'the 'good ol' days' when we used to **listen** to such outstanding dancers as Bill Robinson — as well as watch them . . .

Wham! Bam! Back to the present.

What's the reason for this sad state of affairs?

Well, after tossing these questions around for quite a spell, — the answers seem quite simple, after all. The **hoofers** simply outnumber the **dancers** — and by alarming odds.

In the first place, little or no thought seems to be going into 'shading' and 'feeling'. To give you an example of what I mean: Many times upon entering a dance studio I have had the impression that a group of carpenters were busy rebuilding it. Actually, it was merely a group of Tap dancers working out.

It stands to reason that no music lover would enjoy a horn blowing or a drum blasting in his ear. The same thing applies to Tap dancing, and those who watch it.

Perhaps the main reason for this slam-bang type of hoofing can be traced to the 'body' or rather the lack of 'using the body' which I consider to be the most important of all rules. Next comes

Bobby Root ("Tap Dancing . . . .

It's Not Just a Racket") formerly a professional Tap dancer of national fame, is now on the faculty of the Baker Dance Studios in Montebello, California. Mr. Root is a specialist in Tap rhythms as well as the manufacturer of Magnatone Taps—the tap that allows your feet to flex . . . .

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the arms, then the head, and last — the feet.

My personal theory is that if we first have the correct body position, we will automatically have the correct position of the feet — for it is difficult to have one without the other. When we have the correct position we won't have too much difficulty getting the taps. In fact, we would have to actually 'go out of our way' to miss them. In other words, by assuming the correct body position, we will always be **ready** for the taps.

Primarily, the reason why most beginners have so much trouble making proper taps is the fact that they usually are not ready (or in position) to do what we, as teachers, expect them to do.

Keep in mind that we can do little, or nothing, unless we are in a proper **position** to do so.

It seems to me that concentrating on just the taps of a step at the **beginning** encourages bad practice habits as the student misses the entire pattern of the step and is likely to practice wrong.

To me, Tap dancing is and should be a most natural type of dancing. I usually refer to it as 'controlled relaxation'. One of the troubles with most students is that they try too hard. I find this causes them to become too tense, thereby causing them to make a lot of unnecessary movement — and generally the wrong kind. To go further, I would say that there is entirely far too much wasted vertical movement with most Tap dancers. After all, Tap dancing was originally intended to be executed on the **floor** — which, incidentally, is a mighty good place to hit the taps.

Before attempting to dance any step I have found it very helpful to keep two important things in mind: (1) Position; (2) Direction.

Coming back to what I like to refer to as the 'Big 4', (Body, Arms, Head and Feet), our goal should be to coordinate these

particular sections of our body as a team — rather than having them fight one another as is too often the case. And you'll be aware when you have achieved such coordination for you will literally "feel it". For example: we've all had extra good days when everything seemed just right. That's just the way it will be with your dancing. Everything you do, every tap you make, will just fall right in place . . .

Now before I close this dissertation on the ramifications of audible terpsichore, I am highly in favor of everyone getting right up and trying out my personal riff exercise — which, incidentally, will help to wear out a lot of Taps — and which will be excellent for the sale of new Taps. So, in case you're still interested, here it is:

	Foot	Count		Foot	Count
Heel Drop	L	1	Brush Back,		
Riff	R	+A	Step, Heel Drop	R	+A4
Heel Drop	L	2	Heel Dig,		
Heel Dig, Toe Clamp	R	+A	Brush Back	L	+A
Heel Drop	L	3	Reverse		
			(5+A 6+A 7+A 8+A)		

#

The Signature of Locality

by j marks

SAN FRANCISCO . . . . Some months ago a few commentaries were set down here regarding a local problem with national implications: the misfortunes of the Performing Arts Division of the San Francisco Annual Art Festival. Similar statements of concern, suggestion and condemnation have appeared in other periodicals of this city. It is heartening to realize that Festival Director, Felix Rosenthal, has given attention to such opinions and has reconstructed many of the Festival plans and procedures for 1955.

What this means to San Francisco is that Dance, as an abiding art form, has been liberated from the politics of a few and has been placed upon a level where the idea of dance is more important than the influence, power, or historical prestige of any individual or organization.

THE ACADEMY OF BALLET presents a summer concert . . . . I have heard interesting tales over the past months about a new ballet company, namely: 'The Ballet' of the Academy of Ballet. The first major effort by this long established school of Guillermo del Oro and Carolyn Parks on June 28, at the Marines' Memorial Theatre, was greeted with enthusiasm and expectation.

This new company of the Academy of Ballet is young in a great many respects. However, at this point it has every right to be young. It has yet to develop a strong, sound artistic policy, but at the same time, it does show all the signs and potentials of a ballet company which may become a major dance

asset on the West Coast.

The rather sad contention deals only with the possibility that the locality of a cultural preoccupation may fail to recognize a new group and thus smother what otherwise could easily become a source of novelty and healthy balletic competition.

Of great interest were the combined cooperative forces of the established Marin Symphony Ballet and the Company of the Academy of Ballet. It is always heartening to see two groups share a program with individual integrity and, at the same time, a remarkable sense of unity and empathy. To see Eva Schoenberg for the first time was gratifying. With more performance and greater choreographic design to execute, she will doubtless become a beautiful dancer. The educational finesse and intelligence of Guillermo del Oro is widely appreciated. His students, shown in his performance, were a great testimony of his abilities as a teacher. Choreographically he may be admired for a work of competence and clarity.

The program's major achievement, strangely enough, was presented by the Marin Symphony Ballet. Performing the design of Leana Norman, the Marin group succeeded in 'L'armoire a Porcelaine' to create an artistic moment of originality and freshness. The decor of Rae Kibbe was effective and meaningful. The dancing altogether expert and intelligent.

GUEST INSTRUCTOR . . . . From the Raoul Pause Studio of Ballet comes news of the residence of Kyra Nijinsky daughter of the illustrious master danseur. She will be active as guest instructor for the eight-week summer session at the school which has its offices in Oakland.

FOR THE FUTURE . . . . Climaxing a year of outstanding and abundant dance performances in San Francisco are a number of international appearances. August 15, the New York City Ballet will present two weeks of programs at the War Memorial Opera House. Scheduled for the first week is the production of the complete 'Nutcracker', an event that has become a tradition of the NYC Ballet in this city.

The Halprin-Lathrop Company has announced tentative plans for their second concert this year to be held in mid-August.

The Stern Grove Concert Series will present the distinguished San Francisco Ballet, Sept. 25.

Also in September will be a presentation of Spanish dances by the Lola Montes Company at Sterns Grove.

The Sadler's Wells Ballet arrives in November with numerous Ashton Choreographies.

A SOAP BOX IS NOT A BED OF ROSES. I have often heard people contend that the position of the critic is unessential to the art world. This is a consideration which often occupies my thinking. Perhaps a few letters of mixed impli-

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cations received here are sufficient stimulus to warrant a few words on the subject. Particularly, since the criticism is finally an effort towards clarification and definition

The universally dictated response which the critic is supposed to give when his authority is challenged reads something like this:

The critic's capacity is one of maintaining a standard in the world of art, to adjudge works and efforts according to the traditions of his aesthetic values, and to summarize his remarks in a manner which illumines a positive direction for future achievements.

Very high-sounding and exacting, the doctrine has a few unfortunate holes which are greeted in critical circles with distress and often apology. Cultural standards are, contrary to the impression of the foregoing statement, unstable things. The cultural levels of the critic are much like the taste buds of the epicurean's appetite: they tend to become exhausted through over-indulgence. Personally, I have always made efforts to adjust the reader to that particular frame of reference and level of personal taste which guides my appraisals and subsequent commentaries. My major endeavor, I have felt, was the promotion of dance on the West Coast. For this reason I attempt to sight the excellence of performances, the imagination and integrity before tackling the unpleasant task of projecting dissatisfaction.

One who wishes to promote an art must be considerably fond of that medium of expression, therefore, when one is confronted with an exhibition on a public and professional stage which in almost every instance seems to act towards the degeneration of that art, then the dance promoter must become critical in an effort to save the face of his art.

It is taken for granted that such criticism is the product of an individual mind, an individual cultural level and standard. Admittedly this standard will in some instances represent the brotherhood of the modern, and in other instances, the classicists. Yet, no matter the affiliation, one cannot help fearing that his remarks will smother an effort rather than aid and seek to correct its errors. Or one fears his remarks may create a false artistic economy resulting in the inclination to relax upon the prestige of the past.

WHAT IS CRITICISM? . . . . Stimulation seems to me to be the best term for it. Hardly law and almighty judgment, but a source of stimulation for audiences, for growing artists and for interesting reading.

The critic can be many things. His comments can be a melodrama of empty and emotionally rousing gesticulations, or it can express itself with an appreciation for what I trust, is essentially an intelligent world. But, whatever its nature level, fortunately no critic or his judgment can replace the personal judgment of those who have observed a work for themselves.

A responsibility which it seems to me all critics accept involves an adjustment to the contemporary. I mean that the critic recognizes that the art speaks to its particular age and decade.

Critics of the ages have made a great many errors: they have in many instances failed to understand the emergence of a new art form. Rarely, however, has a critic been in error when he looked upon the trite, the old and the abandoned. A critic rarely apologizes for errors, snap judgments, misunderstandings or random assertions. He is not supposed to be right—he is supposed to attempt to be right.

Whether he likes Bartok, Martha Graham and Braque, or Chopin, Duncan and Degas, there is never an instance when he has reason or justification to apologize for calling the inability of an artist to understand and to express his contemporary environment a basic, admittedly sad, but inexcusable artistic weakness.

●

AMERICAN CHOREOGRAPHER HIGHLIGHTS RAMBERT SEASON IN LONDON, ENGLAND

American choreographer Robert Joffrey has injected much-needed lifeblood into England's Ballet Rambert. The first week of Rambert's London season saw no less than two new works into the repertoire from the agile, if overful, young brain of Joffrey.

Major of the two is 'Persephone', a 'modern lyrical ballad' based on the Greek Legend of Demeter's daughter who is abducted by Pluto and only returned to her powerful mother after half the earth has been barronized by the revengeful Demeter. The hostage is no atomic age invention, apparently: the Greeks had a legend for it!

Joffrey's choreography had the virtues of brightness, multi-scoped origins and a rakish approach to the fine score from Vivaldi's Suite for Strings and Orchestra. But, at times, I felt he was too glib with his movements, rushing the pace without fully penetrating the choreography's potential.

But thank god for a choreographer who has such vivid imaginations that one can run helter-skelter. . . our woe is the choreographer who dries after five minutes.

The ballet also introduced a young Dutch artist, Harri Wich, as designer

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The Ballet Genius

BY DICK HARVEST

THE THEATER was packed and to the ecstatic acclaim of the audience, the young dancer had just leapt the whole length of the stage and through a window without touching the ground. Nijinsky had danced his most famous ballet, "Spectre of the Rose."

The wildly applauding crowd didn't know, however, that four men waited backstage to catch him at the end of his wonderful leap. Neither was it aware that he had to be revived with a wet towel and had to receive heart massage every time he performed this amazing feat.

It was enough that adoring fans scrambled for the petals from his costume as souvenirs. So many of these were snatched up at each performance by the young star's admirers that he required a new costume every few days. In fact, it is said that one attendant was able to build a house with the money he received from the secret sale of the tiny pieces of Nijinsky's ballet costumes.

Of all his admirers, only Romola de Pulsky sighed. She was desperately in love with the young dancer. The lovely young Hungarian girl had fallen in love with the rising ballet star almost the first time she had seen him. Nijinsky, however, intent on becoming the greatest dancer of all time, never seemed to notice her.

So wonderful was he on the stage that the great Pavlova fainted in a temper when she realized that the

nimble-footed young man was getting more of the world's applause than she was.

Yet Vaslav Nijinsky was shy and retiring. He had been backward as a boy and never completely managed to overcome his shyness. At school the other children mocked his accent and poked fun at his ways.

When he began dancing, his classmates soaped the floor and then dared him to take one of his high jumps. Nijinsky accepted the challenge and hurt himself when he fell. Yet he suffered in silence.

Time soon brought perfection to his rare talent. Thousands now sat breathlessly every night as he performed his spectacular feats.

And always, standing in the wings was the wistful-looking young Romola. So infatuated had she been that she had joined the same ballet company just to be near him. How many, many times had she been introduced to him only to have him completely fail to remember her?

Then one day, without warning, his attitude towards her completely changed. Excitedly, he called a friend and begged him to tell Romola he wanted to marry her. Poor Vaslav was too shy to propose himself.

She accepted, and they were married soon after. The marriage so incensed Diaghileff, the rich patron behind the ballet company, that he fired Nijinsky.

But tragedy was to haunt the young lovers.

At rehearsals, all sorts of unexplained things happened to him. On one occasion a huge piece of timber crashed down onto the stage — just missing his head. Another time a huge glass reflector smashed to pieces on the stage after falling onto the spot he had left a moment before.

Nijinsky believed that someone was trying to kill him. In fear and trembling, he locked himself in his room and refused to come out. Only after the company entreated the dancer to come on stage did he eventually do so.

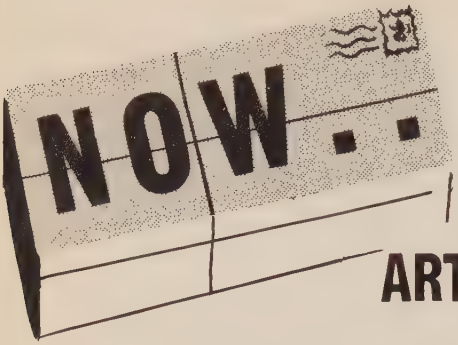
By this time, the sure signs of mental strain were apparent. It was soon to become evident that Nijinsky's mind was becoming clouded.

One day he set out to walk through the village of St. Moritz. He carried a huge golden cross and called upon the people to pray. Soon afterwards at a fashionable hotel, he laid down a huge cross of velvet and, after announcing his intentions to the startled guests, began then and there to dance.

Within days of this — at the very height of his fame — the great Nijinsky was declared incurably insane. He was not yet thirty years old.

Although efforts were made from time to time to set his wonderful feet dancing again, he never recovered his old powers.

There was no one quite like Nijinsky. It is unlikely that there ever will be.



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(from page 289)

of the costumes and decor. He, too, achieved a brightness not without promise. Altogether 'Persephone' is perhaps the most loose-limbed, tradition-free work in Rambert's current repertoire.

The evening was a triumph for young Noreen Sopwith who, tiny as Persephone caught exactly the childish innocence demanded and danced with sturdy technique and fine lyrical quality. Rambert famed for her discoveries here as, say, Godfrey is in the U.S., has certainly achieved another plume. Noreen Sopwith will most certainly be a dancer of importance to contemporary ballet.

PAS DES DEESES

Three days later, Joffrey's second work was presented, Pas Des Deese. This did not, I am afraid, amount to much. The basic idea, that of reconstructing Chalon's famous lithograph, is sound. But neither Joffrey's choreography, nor the dancers of Rambert's company can do justice to a depiction of Cerrito, Grahn and Taglioni. In a neat promotional touch the programme note upped Saint-Leon to the status of St. Leon. This was the only thing advanced by the ballet.

Basically, I should say that the hindrance between choreographer Joffrey and his achievement of really worthwhile work is quite simple: time. Both ballets seen here were over-rushed. I've remarked before that the inherent danger to art today is not philistinism but mere deadlinery. I hope it doesn't prove fatal in this case. Joffrey has a great deal of talent, I want to see more of him. ■

EDITS NEW MAGAZINE

Peter Craig-Raymond, Dancing Star's London editor, recently became editor of England's new pocket-size magazine 'Teen & Twenty'.

Slanted toward the young set, the magazine is compactly put together with news and photo coverage on movies, stage, ballet, music, sports and a special column on beauty pointers by Pat Raymond.

If 'Teen & Twenty' retains its present pace—it shouldn't want for readers. ■

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NORA AND ISTVAN TELL THEIR OWN STORY

BOOKS

George Mikas, London correspondent for a New York daily, has told the Istvan Rabovsky and Nora Kovach escape story in the dancers' own words. Here DANCING STAR'S London Editor, Peter Craig-Raymond, reviews the result . . .

Budapest . . . Berlin . . . London . . . New York . . . the success story of the Rabovskys, Nora and Istvan, is one of the greatest in the history of ballet. George Mikes has set out to tell, not exactly this full story, but simply the tale of their break-away escape from the Reds.

The result, a two hundred page book written "in their own words," makes enthralling reading. "Leap Through The Curtain" is published in Britain by Weidenfeld & Nicolson at about two dollars; no U. S. publication date has yet been set.

Sol Hurok begins the story in a preface, telling of the day in June of 1953 when he met Nora and Istvan — fresh from their runaway — in Nuremberg. The next day Sol handed Istvan the first "dollar cheque" in his life . . . the dancers' first western money, in fact.

The story of the escape is told successively by Istvan (who chronicles it factually) and Nora (who dramatizes, explores for humour, shoots temperamental fireworks). Together they race through the story which made them headline news throughout the Western world.

A life story told as a duet, culminating in the actual possibility of escape . . .
"We should like to go over to the West."

She turned quite white.

"You mean for an hour?" she asked, but she knew very well what I had in mind.

"No, not for an hour. For good."

She did not say anything for a long time. Then she asked me:

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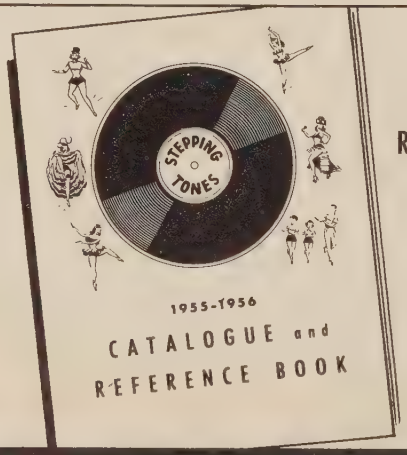

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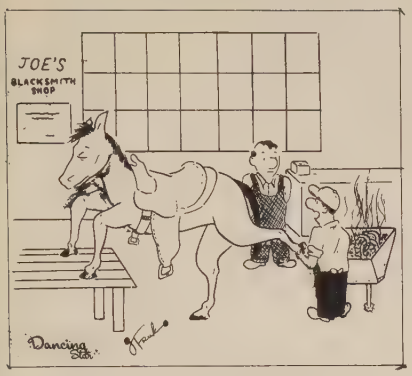

'Can't do a darned thing with her since she hired out to that ballerina.'

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"Have you no clihdren in Hungary?"

"No, we have no children."

Another long pause followed. Pista (Istvan) asked her:

"There is an underground station in front of the hotel. Where do these trains go to?" "Ruhleben is the name of the terminus," she said, "and Ruhleben is in the West."

"Don't try to go over," she said before leaving. "It is very, very dangerous. If they catch you, you are finished."

She took something out of her bag, pushed it in my hand.

She banged the door behind her and disappeared.

I had a map of Berlin in my hand.

(page 313)

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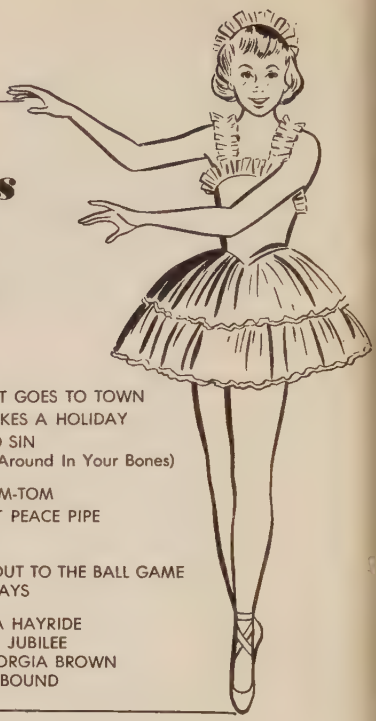

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MERCE CUNNINGHAM

by JUNE L. HERMAN

It is rare to find a dancer who commands and simplifies the whole conception of the dance through a kind of complexity which is based on directness. Merce Cunningham's work resembles modern dance by using the full body and compares to ballet by use of spacious movements into the air. Yet, by offering a dynamic process of giving form to ideas, Mr. Cunningham has been able to establish a new approach to the dance and he has permitted audiences to appreciate dance as an emotion in or for itself. By coordinating his independent spirit and decisive mind with his perfectly trained and controlled body Merce Cunningham dismisses the grim psychological theory of modern dance and brings about a tranquility with a variety of natural, but often over-looked human gestures. He has been able to mirror the essentials of mankind's emotion.

Leader of the avant-garde dancers, Mr. Cunningham applies and translates his technical finish to some brilliant, original and imaginative choreography. Working under the theory that music does not support the dance; that the two although interrelated exist alone, he was the first dancer to compose dances for magnetic tape-sounds reproduced on tape which make creative use of modern electronics. Emotional elements inherent in natural sounds are superbly discovered in Mr. Cunningham's compositions and forms. 'Suite By Chance' which was first presented at the University of Illinois Festival of Contemporary Arts, carries with it the actuality and reality of chance. Applied to dance, Mr. Cunningham is concerned with the idea of continuity in dance. He has gone beyond the orthodox theories of set movements following each other; he has imagined an uninhibited

The Dance In Chicago

ROD QUIROS

BALLET THEATRE BIDS FESTIVE GOODBYE TO U.S.

Ravinia Park, summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, again invited Ballet Theatre for a pre-season week of ballet. This was the last U.S. stop the company made before embarking on a long six-month tour of Central and South America.

The company, re-assembled here after several weeks vacation looked as fresh and co-ordinated as ever. This year highlights were provided not only by starts, but by some of the soloists who sparkled during the short season.

Three good reasons give credence to the assumption that Ballet Theatre, under the sponsorship of ANTA (American National Theatre Academy) will prove a more than capable cultural ambassador south of the border.

The first reason being the return to the company of Rosella Hightower. In the nearly seven years spent with European companies—mainly in France—Miss Hightower has acquired mannerisms that at times are annoying. However, underneath them all is a brilliant technique in the grand style. She was at her best in Pas De Quatre where her beautiful, limpid line showed to best advantage. In Swan Lake her attack was secure, sometimes flashy, but always with style.

Another pleasant gift Ballet Theatre is taking to South America is the tremendous technical development of the company's ballerina, Nora Kaye. For many years we have known Miss Kaye as the 'Duse of the Dance', and for an equally long time we have admired her great dramatic powers. We enjoy her secure, serene technical resources that now place her among the great

sequence based on chance.

Commissioned by Brandeis University, 'Collage' originally called 'Symphonie Pour Un Homme Seul' was presented at the University's Creative Arts Festival. In 1944, He was commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art's Serenade Concerts to choreograph 'The Winds Remain' (Lorca-Bowles). For the Ballet Society, Mr. Cunningham was incited to choreograph 'The Seasons' (Cage Noguchi). Last year he received the Guggenheim Fellowship to carry on his work in the dance.

Born in Centralia, Washington, Merce Cunningham studied at the Cornish School of Arts in Seattle. While studying in Oakland, California, he met Martha Graham, who invited him to join her in New York to perform with her group as a soloist. Mr. Cunningham's roles were: March in 'Letter To The World' the preacher in 'Appalachian Spring', the Christ Figure in 'El Penitente', among others. In 1944 he went on three solo tours across the United States and following the war, performed and taught in Paris.

NOTE: Mervin Leeds of the San Francisco Dance League is at present arranging a program of Merce Cunningham & Dance Company to be presented in San Francisco this November.

Mr. Cunningham will also be active as a teacher during the summer at Idylwild and San Francisco for the Welland Lathrop School of Dance.

It should also be noted that John Cage, Musical Director for the Cunningham company is at present organizing a world-tour involving Merce Cunningham & Company which will include, aside from the aforementioned, David Tudor.

The Cunningham unit will be available for California engagements during November and again in May 1956 following their European tour.

GUIDE TO DANCE PERIODICALS
Vol. 5, 1951-52
Compiled by S. Yancey Belknap
(University of Florida Press, Gainsville, Fla., $7.50)

BOOKS

(Review by Lisa Lekis)

The publication by the University of Florida Press of "Guide to Dance Periodicals", Vol. V., prepared and compiled by S. Yancey Belknap, Director of the Music and Dance Archives of the University of Florida Library, marks an outstanding and unique contribution to the field of fine arts.

It has often been remarked that "dance dies with the dancer." Dance of all the arts has received little written treatment previous to the publication of a group of periodicals featuring articles, dance notations, choreographies and biographical sketches of dance and dancers. Until an analytical index could be published, however, much of the best source material in this field was unavailable to dancers and researchers. **Guide to Dance Periodicals** including a complete compilation of articles, authors and subjects published in nineteen current periodicals is an accurate and authoritative index which makes accessible the works of dancers, critics, choreographers and musicians in many fields of dance.

Since dance is a visual art form, Yancey Belknap has greatly increased the value of her work by the inclusion of an index of dance illustrations and photographs. For dance teachers and students, pictures are a guide to performance and for everyone dance can live through pictures in a way no words can ever express.

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Dance has long been the "stepchild of the arts." Only four Universities award degrees in dance, and the usual procedure for the dancer is to leave rather than enter the University for training. One of the reasons for the exclusion of dance as a fine art from the University curriculum is the lack of precision tools for teaching — dance does not have a score, nor can its results be exhibited in a gallery. Yancey Belknap's compilation fills one of the gaps which has made dance education difficult, it has made a working bibliography of contemporary dance possible.

(page 305)

ballerinas. Her Swan Lake was just a prelude for her Giselle. In this ballet Miss Kaye's transition was complete: she no longer is an actress who can dance—but rather, a ballerina who can act.

The company's soloists are another reason the troupe is assured a successful tour. Lupe Serrano is rapidly developing into a brilliant young ballerina; Ruth Ann Koesun, technically improved, is developing a style of her own, which is the most any dancer can achieve. Sonia Arova is just right for Myrtha in Giselle, and right in anything she does.

As for the men: Scott Douglas is making great strides in the classical style and holds promise of much more to come. What can be said of Igor Youskevitch that has not already been said? Therefore I shall merely repeat what many have said before, that he is the finest male dancer around.

Ballet Theatre is loaded with talent: Barbara Lloyd, Christine Meyer, Michael Lland, Job Sanders and many others go to make up this group that is truly representative of our American artistic ideals.

■

LONDON FOOTNOTES

by

PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

♦ ♦ ♦ Kenneth Macmillan became British ballet's hero this month with a second new ballet at Sadler's Wells-theatre. Better even than his DANSES CONCERTANTES, the new one is HOUSE OF BIRDS.

Again Macmillan collaborated with young, balletgenic designer Nicholas Georgiadis. And this time they had a thoroughly balletic story to project: the fairy tale of the bewitched, bewinged, becaged girls whom a magician turns into birds. His latest victim, luckily, has a swain brave who rescues her, uncages the other victims and puts the the magician to flight.

Yes, another fey and fairy potion; but, with reservations for that, House of Birds is a notable short ballet. Maryon Lane and David Poole danced the principal roles of the lovers.

♦ ♦ ♦ Violetta Elvin followed Svetlana Beriosova on television's most dance-minded programme, 'Music For You'. Elvin had just returned from her South American appearances which, she tells me, went extremely well.

♦ ♦ ♦ Gene Kelly flew into London and MGM threw a party for him as a preview to BRIGADOON—just arrived here and, to my mind, an excellent musical with some delightful moments. . . most of them Cyd Charisse! I asked Gene about INVITATION TO THE DANCE, his loo-ong awaited film. This is now on the 1955 release list here at Metro. But I will believe it when seen.

♦ ♦ ♦ Three days later Esther Williams arrived to be badgered by dozens of Fleet-streeters who wanted to know how many swim-suits she had in her bags. I asked if she was arranging for her aquashow to visit Europe. . . and received such a quaint look.

♦ ♦ ♦ Young Valerie Taylor whom I wrote about in Dancing Star a few months ago is now to dance the Miller's Wife in Massine's LE TRICORNE at Covent Garden. Pirimn Trecu, recently promoted from the junior company, will dance Massine's Miller.

♦ ♦ ♦ Changes at the junior company include the departure of principal male dancer David Poole and Gilbert Vernon, Maryon Lane, Patricia Miller and Annette Page.

♦ ♦ ♦ Oleg Briansky has joined Cuevas, Kenneth Melville has joined Anton Dolin's Festival Ballet. Festival's guest ballerina in London this July will be Alexandra Danilova whose MME. FIFI (seen in the U.S. last year) will be revived for the occasion.

♦ ♦ ♦ THE LADY & THE FOOL, John Cranko's fine short ballet which was premiered at Sadler's Wells Theatre, is being remounted at Covent Garden. Cranko and his designer, Richard Beer, have done extensive alterations in preparation for this new production in which Beryl Grey stars with Philip Chatfield and Ray Powell. Sadler's Wells Ballet opens in New York, of course, in September.

♦ ♦ ♦ Whilst preparing the Well's U.S. tour, Sol Hurok has paid another visit here. He is signing talent for his NBC-TV specs for 1958-1959. Far-seeing Sol!

♦ ♦ ♦ Ballet Rambert has an opportune season at Aix-les-Baines during which Violetta Elvin will be guest ballerina.

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American choreographer Robert Joffrey has created two new works for the company.

♦ ♦ ♦ New York City Ballet's Michael Maule in London to appear during the summer season at Festival-Hall with Festival Ballet. Alicia Alonso is also rumoured as a possible guest later in the season.

♦ ♦ ♦ Ann Hutchinson is expected here come September to work in conjunction with local Laban specialists in the preparation of textbooks in Labanotation (a system of choreographic recording). Ann Hutchinson, president of New York's Dance Notation Bureau, received a $10,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Sadler's Wells School, now again expanded, is to teach Labanotation as from next year.

♦ ♦ ♦ The possibility of a ballet advisor to the major television originators here is being mooted. ABC-TV and AR-TV are the two contractors who are to control London's commercial television. I had an interesting chat, by the way, with Dan Golenpaul (of NBC-TV's 'Information Please') when he paid a 'top secret' visit here last week. The really top secret for Dan: how I discovered his whereabouts! ♦ ♦ ♦

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HOUSTON, TEXAS FORMS NEW YOUTH SYMPHONY BALLET

Organization of the Houston Youth Symphony, which will perform in conjunction with the Houston Youth Symphony, has been announced by Weed Peterson, president of the parent group which this year celebrates its tenth anniversary.

Director and choreographer for the 1955-56 season is Emmamae Horn, prominent Houston dance teacher. An auditions board has been appointed to screen applicants for the company.

The board consists of Edna Herzog, Arlyn Sinclair, Frances Putnam, Bruce Roush, Mildred Godley and Julie Rozan, all dance teachers in Houston, representing the dance medium; Max Winder, David Wuliger, Ernest Cassel, Fredell Lack and Irving Wadler, representing music; Harry Worthman, art; Jack Mc Clendon, theater and music, and Emory Thompson, theater.

Membership in the Houston Youth Symphony Ballet is open to all serious dance students in and around Houston. Dance teachers are invited to recommend any of their pupils.

Students must be at least 12 years of age. At that age, according to Emmamae Horn, serious students will have been dancing several years and will have had at least two years experience with toe shoes.

The Houston Youth Symphony becomes the sixth group of the organization. Already in operation are the concert, intermediate and beginners orchestras, the Boys' Choir and a conducting class held by Howard F. Webb, Houston Symphony conductor and musical director.

There will be no academy attached to the Houston Youth Symphony Ballet. Members of the company will continue their dance lessons from their own private teachers.

☆

by

NADINE NICOLAEVA-LEGAT

The Editors take pleasure in presenting a transcript of a lecture given by NADINE NICOLAEVA-LEGAT, *one-time Prima Ballerina in pre-Soviet Russia, wife of the great* Nicholas Legat, *and at present an outstanding teacher of Ballet. This material was sent us by* Peter Craig-Raymond, *London Editor for* DANCING STAR MAGAZINE.

(The Second of Two Parts)

In our leisure time we enjoyed bathing in the Adriatic and eating casata. Poor Serge was working very hard, and seldom had more than a lire (about 6d. or 3d.) in his pocket. We instructed him in the history and tradition of the Russian Ballet methods and all about our theatres and Arts. He was really a very capable boy and made rapid progress. By degrees he learnt various pas de deux from Lac des Cygnes, etc. Diaghilev was delighted.

We were invited to dance at the houses of some of the Italian nobility, but Diaghilev, although he had promised to arrange several such concerts for us was somewhat jealous of his artists and not too keen when they appeared in public apart from his own ballet. However, Diaghilev was delighted with the results of Serge's progress and made up his mind that Serge was to be the hit of the coming season.

In conclusion I would mention a few characteristics that I personally noticed in Diaghilev.

First of all he had a fear of water, and when on a steamer would always feel safer standing in the middle of the boat close to the funnels.

Secondly, he had a fear of becoming ill and at the least pain would quickly retire to rest. He was afraid of death and would always avoid the subject when in conversation.

Once, during the Monte Carlo season he felt ill and was in bed and a member of the company went to see him, but he did not invite her into his bedroom so she deposited some flowers behind the door. A few days later, on arriving at rehearsal he was accosted by the same

lady, who had been trying to attract his attention for some time — "How are you?" she said, "did you like my flowers?" "Oh, so it was you!" he replied, "I asked myself who was the fool who brought the flowers to a sick man before he was in his coffin?"

Another typical incident. Entering herearsal one morning he noticed that all the girls were dressed in long black tights and two or three layers of leggings, whilst the boys were stripped except for small bathing slips. He looked for a moment and then said "Goodness gracious, whatever has happened to my company? All the women have put on extra trousers and the men have taken theirs off!"

Diaghilev had a remarkable instinct for picking out talent, and the way to make the most of his artists, and he made no mistake in selecting Serge Lifar — as everyone knows of Lifar's subsequent career.

Diaghilev had a terrific influence on the members of his company, in developing them as artists, in the complete sense of the word. He would always point out in every town the company visited places of artistic interest and value, and he made his artists refined and cultured.

During our visit to Italy he organized visits to places of historical and artistic interest, many of which already seen by my husband and myself, had completely escaped our memory. He sent us to the baths of Nero which is a deep underground labyrinth, but would not go himself, but waited for us to return.

I would like to point out some interesting sidelights on Diaghilev's long distance policies.

Once, out of fun, I asked him why he kept Serge so short of money and his answer was "If he had more it would detract him from his prime aim — to concentrate on his dancing and art lessons. Most of the greatest artists built themselves when they were poor."

Another time I asked him why he changed his original policy of engaging famous artists, and why he preferred to build up his own stars. He answered that experience has taught him that famous artists mostly used him as a stepping stone to their own ventures, whereas his own stars were more loyal. (My own remark was that perhaps he could not pay the stars as much as they wanted.)

Diaghilev had aesthetic inclinations which extended to the selection of restaurants famous for food, service and comfort.

In conversation he was witty, and a most entertaining and brilliant talker.

My husband and I disliked his modern choreography, and we could not understand the strange deviation from the great traditions of pure classicism which should have imbued his whole nature having been so closely connected with the Imperial Theatres in Russia, and we had no wish nor desire to join his company because of this. It was only after Diaghilev's repeated requests that we embarked upon this remarkable holiday trip to Italy.

After many long and friendly talks during our journey I began to understand Diaghilev's point of view. Perhaps because I, so much young-

Teachers' and Students' section

(from page 299)

In making up her index, the compiler has not limited her work to one field of dance alone. The references include articles devoted to ballet, modern dance, theatrical production, music analysis, folk dance and ethnic dance forms. In it are also included listings of choreographies, biographies, criticisms and historical essays. Most significantly, Yancey Belknap has opened the door to an international exchange of information, for she has included listings of articles from **Ballet** of South America, published in Santiago, Chile. This is the first time a North American bibliographical compilation has included articles of dance as produced and described in Latin America.

Dancers come and go, each making their own transitory contribution to a great art, much of which must be inevitably lost without the painstaking and enthusiastic interest of a librarian, who in her own work has preserved for us the records and pictures of dance of all types. For all teachers, dancers, musicians and choreographers, this book is a must. For all others who share an interest in dance as a cultural form and an international mode of expression, Yancey Belknap's work provides the key to the literature of art as expressed through dance, by dancers.

er than my husband, I could understand, but he would never reconcile himself to the modernism in Diaghilev's ballets, and whilst Diaghilev was very anxious to use Legat, not only as a teacher, but also as an artist on his stage, my husband would always endeavour to get out of performing with the company, and keep to teaching only. Finally, there was a dispute between Diaghilev and my husband, and Legat left for Company. Out of loyalty to my husband I also gave in my resignation, in spite of letters from Diaghilev saying he hoped that the differences of opinion between himself and my husband would not affect my position, and that I would continue with the Company. I refused however to appear in "Petrouska" at the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt in Paris, and that evening L. Lopakova was flown from London to take the part. It was not to annoy Diaghilev, but to support my husband that I took this step. Indeed I had begun to like, and even to become fond of Serge Diaghilev.

— N. N-L.

Mary Ellen Moylan poses for publicity pictures with DMA's national President, Florence Cowanova and Secretary-Treasurer, Leroy H. Thayer during the organization's west coast convention which was held at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco.

—Photo by Bill Cogan

A scene from 'Swan Lake' portrayed by Annette Funicello and Dale Cowart. These young dancers are students of Al Gilbert in Hollywood, Calif. Annette was recently signed to a movie contract by the Walt Disney Studios.

—Photo by Grant

These 'Dancing Dolls' are from Rose Ann's Dance Studio in Menlo Park, California. Martha McGettigan, Irene Gegive, Barbara Lolt, Sandy Johnston, Linda Engstrom, Sue Sjorstom, Denise Garassino, Diana Baker, Dianne Lucas, Sandy Demeter and Diane Weeks. —Menlo Camera Shop.

IN MEMORIAM

ERNEST E. RYAN

Ernest E. Ryan, one of the founders of the Associated Dance Teachers of Southern California died July 10, 1955 in Los Angeles, California.

Mr. Ryan, active in the ADTSC since its inception in 1922, became president shortly after the organization's founding and retained that office for 25 years.

He leaves his widow, Mrs. Clara Ryan, 3946 Crenshaw Blvd.,Los Angeles, Calif.

FRANCES WEBER

Frances Weber, beloved wife of A.J.Weber long-time member and director of Dance Masters of America, passed away, June 2, 1955 in New York.

Mr. Weber was to have taught at the west coast convention of DMA, but due to his wife's illness was unable to keep his engagement.

⊕ Al Margolin's (A&L Theatrical Fabric & Shoe Co.) 4-year-old daughter Debbie, had the thrill of being one of Bill Cassidy's demonstrator models in his acrobatic classes at the San Francisco DMA Convention.

⊕ Charley Baker of the studios bearing his name was selected as one of the 5 Lakewood district judges in the Miss Universe-Contest.

⊕ Juanita Wilent (youngest daughter of dance teacher, Bessie Clark—San Jose) was selected to join the famous Moro Landis Dancers and is at this writing dancing with the group at the Riverside Hotel in Reno, Nev.

⊕ Vera Larsha, after more than 25 years of teaching in Berkeley, Calif., is moving her studio to 909 Foothill Blvd. in Calistoga, Calif. Miss Larsha recently returned from a combination vacation and study tour which included stopovers in New Hampshire, New York City, Canada and Porto Rico. She has been a member of DMA since 1936 and specializes in Oriental and Modern dancing.

This happy group was photographed during the Cecchetti Council of America's west coast meeting which was held at the Mark Hopkins Hotel July 1st in San Francisco. Left to right: Florence Beaudoin, Pat Mason, Pat Mullenbach, Guillermodel Oro, Germain Ballou, Ruth Hanf and Peggy Slater. The other young ladies are ambitious students who were among the many in attendance. —Photo by Beaudoin

Aron Tomaroff, former member of the Pavlowa Co., former partner of Maria Gambarelli, convention teacher, and since '48 conductor of his own school in Marin County—and author of a number of books on dancing—is laying plans for an extensive teaching tour throughout the nation. Mr. Tomaroff will teach Ballet and Character dances for all ages on a first come first served basis. Those interested should write Mr. Tomaroff at: P.O. Box 434, Novato, Calif.

Buddy and Vilma Ebsen taught 'The Big Bear' at the Associated Dance Teachers of Southern California's convention which was held at the Statler Hotel in Los Angeles, California during August. Buddy, who plays Georgie Russell in the TV version of Davy Crockett also wrote the words to the song. Left to right: Tuulikki, Catherine Adams, Buddy Ebsen, Mary Farmer, Secretary-treasurer of ADTSC and Vilma Ebsen, Buddy's sister. —A Kickbush photo

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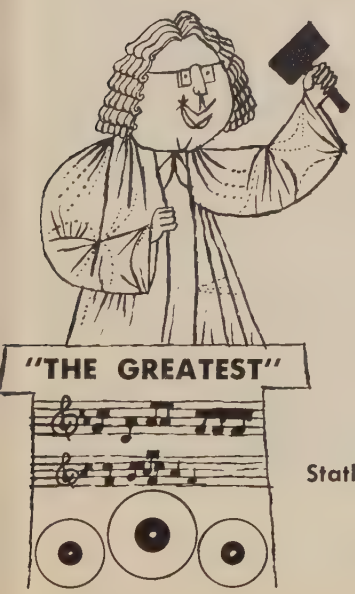

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The Stars of Tomorrow Marching Group pictured above has won 27 first place awards out of a total of 28 in the past two years. Their director is Dorothy Roberts of Redwood City. The girls range in age from 6 to 18.

–E.A.Koch–

Barbara Henson graces Dancing Star Magazine's display at the west coast national convention of Dance Masters of America, Inc. Attached to the back drop are a few Bill Cogan photographs which have appeared on various covers of this magazine.

MANUAL OF ARMS TAP

An Intermediate Military Tap Routine for Children over 6 yrs.

★ by Al Gilbert ★

MUSIC: "STRIKE UP THE BAND" - 4 Bar Intro, 2 Cho. Especially arranged to: STEPPING TONES RECORD #22 - "B" Side.

MEAS.	COUNT	TERM
		STEP ONE
		(Entrance Step, Entering from Stage R)
1	1,2	March R
	3,4	March L
2	5-8	Repeat Meas. 1
3	&	Step R fwd
	1	Step L fwd next to R
	2	Step R back
	3	Step L back next to R
	4	Step R to side R
4	5	Drop R heel, while making a R spot turn
	6	Step L, after completing R spot turn
	7	Step R next to L
	8	Hold
5-8		Reverse Meas. 1-4, end facing audience.
		STEP TWO
9	8&1	Shuffle Step R
	2&3	Shuffle Step L
10	4&5	Shuffle Step R
	6	Step L in place
	7	Step R in place
	8	Hold
11	1,2	Step L to side L
	3,4	Step R next to L
12	5,6	Rifle salute at R shoulder arms (bring L hand up in front of body, Pic. 2, shoulder level, fingertips touching gun)
	7	Return L hand to L side
13-16		Reverse Meas. 9-12 (Repeat Salute)

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MEAS.	COUNT	TERM
		STEP THREE
17	&8	Shuffle R
	&	Hop L
	1	Step R together
	2	Step L together
	3	Step R together
		(1-3 in Marching style in place)
18	&4-7	Reverse Meas. 17
	8	Hold
19	1-4	Place gun in front of body, L hand in center of rifle, see Pic. #3
20	5,6	Place R hand on small of stock, see Pic. #4
	7	Twist rifle so that it is now directly in front of body in vertical position, see Pic. #5
21,22	&8-8	Repeat Meas. 17,18
23	1,2	Return rifle to position in Pic. #4
	3,4	Move R hand to bottom of rifle, Pic. #3
24	5,6	Return rifle to R shoulder, placing it there with L hand as in Pic. #6
	7,8	L hand at L side
		STEP FOUR
25	1,2	March R fwd
	3,4	March L fwd
26	5,6	March R fwd
	7,8	March L to L, facing Stage L
27,28	1-8	Repeat Meas. 25,26, marching toward Stage L, and on 7,8, face upstage
29,30	1-8	Repeat Meas. 25,26, marching upstage, and on 7,8, face Stage R
31,32	1-8	Repeat Meas. 3,4, and end facing front

(To be concluded next month)

(from page 295)

SHORT WALK

So it came — the short, incredibly short walk which took Nora and Istvan out of the puppet East Germany and into the Western area.

The rest, as Nora says, is up to them. "We can conquer or we can fail — and we shall do our very best not to fail. The world is ours. Or — to be more precise — half of the world. But I have always been a modest little girl; I am satisfied with half of the world!"

The world, in turn, seems satisfied with Nora and Istvan. Their leap through the curtain brought them upon a larger, greater stage.

I think they will deserve it. #

MANUAL OF ARMS TAP

Picture #1

Picture #2

Picture #3

Picture #4

Picture #5

Picture #6

Picture #7

Picture #8

Picture #9

—An AL GILBERT routine. P.O. Box 36479 Hollywood 36, Calif.—

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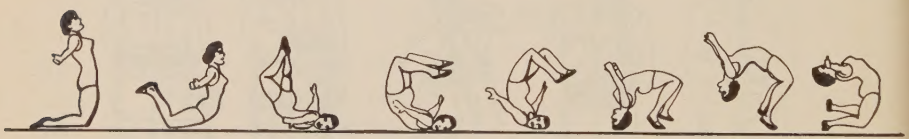
1. FRONT CHEST ROLL HOLDING ANKLES

From a kneeling position on floor, hands over head. Bend backward and grasp toes or ankles firmly with both hands. Immediately roll forward, pulling both feet forward over the head and down under the shoulders, forcing body over into a regular chest roll. Keep rolling in a continuous motion across floor or mat. On last chest roll, let go of feet and finish on both feet as in a regular front limber. Head may be turned so as to roll on side of face.



2. FRONT CHEST ROLL WITHOUT HANDS

From a kneeling position on floor with both arms extended sideward. Arch back strongly and roll over forward at the same time whipping both legs up over head with bent knees, forcing body over into a front chest roll and finishing in starting position on both knees again. Pupil may turn head to one side when going over.

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